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ABSTRACT

One of a series, the guide is concerned with the teaching of literature to gifted students in grades 1 through 3. An introduction discusses cognitive and affective domains, educational objectives, general statements about the gifted, and selected teaching approaches. Literary and interpretive skills are considered in terms of an introductory lesson and ten sequential lessons on plot, characters, discovery, tone, language, perceptions, the concept of person, and an analysis of mysteries. The presentation and application of a culminating project are explored as is the development of a critical sense. EC 031 963 is a companion volume for grades 9 through 12. (RJ)

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CURRICULUM GUIDE FOR TEACHING GIFTED CHILDREN LITERATURE IN GRADES ONE THROUGH THREE

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Max Rafferty, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Sacramento, 1970

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CURRICULUM GUIDE FOR TEACHING GIFTED CHILDREN LITERATURE IN GRADES ONE THROUGH THREE

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DIVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
California State Department of Education

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FOREWORD

California public schools should provide equal opportunity for every girl and boy of school age to become knowledgeable in the basic subjects and proficient in using the basic skills of learning. And the educational programs offered by the schools should be of sufficient scope and depth to permit each child to learn at the rate and to the full level that his ability permits.

In conducting their educational programs, the schools must employ practices that are sufficiently flexible to permit the adjustments required to meet each pupil's need of special education. The talented are among those for whom such adjustments will be necessary. Recently the State Department of Education directed and coordinated a federally funded project for the development of curriculum materials of the type needed for this program. The materials reflect the best thinking of people who are well qualified both by education and by experience. They are both innovative and professional.

This curriculum guide, one of a series, is concerned with the teaching of literature to mentally gifted pupils in grades one through three. The concepts and suggestions contained in it merit thoughtful attention, appropriate interpretation, and wise application.

Max Rafferty

Superintendent of Public Instruction

PREFACE

This curriculum guide, which was planned and completed as part of a project under provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title V, is designed to be used by teachers of mentally gifted children whose general mental ability is in the top 2 percent of all girls and boys.

Curriculum Guide for Teaching Gifted Children Literature in Grades One Through Three is one of a series of curriculum guides that are designed for the following educational levels: grades one through three, four through six, seven and eight, and nine through twelve. The guides were prepared under the direction of John C. Gowan, Professor of Education, and his assistant, Joyce Sonntag, Assistant Professor of Education, both of San Fernando Valley State College.

A curriculum framework that is designed for use in developing programs for mentally gifted minors was also developed in the project. This framework was prepared under the direction of Mary N. Meeker, Associate Professor of Education, University of Southern California, and James Magary, Associate Professor of Educational Psychology, University of Southern California.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction to This Guide

An obvious and widely accepted motivation for children to learn to read and understand literature is simply the "enjoyment of reading a good book." Recreational reading is indeed a worthwhile habit for children to acquire, but this acquisition hardly represents the ultimate purpose for teaching literary skills.

In a broad sense, the educational objectives for gifted pupils are similar to those for all children; namely, to achieve academic competence at the highest possible level and to utilize this competence in personal, intellectual, and creative endeavors.

When we consider how dependent man is upon his ability to understand and interpret recorded language, we begin to realize how important it is for him to develop his reading skills. It is hoped that this guide will provide teachers with some ideas for teaching literary skills on a much higher intellectual plane than merely that of comprehension, speed, and accuracy.

Cognitive and Affective Domains

The general structure of this guide is intentionally related to the concepts described in *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, edited by Bloom, Krathwohl, and others.[1] Emphasis is on both the cognitive domain and the affective domain.

Teachers of the primary grades generally do an adequate job of teaching literary skills on the lower levels of the *cognitive domain,* which is concerned with remembering, reproducing, analyzing, and synthesizing. In the *affective domain,* however, where educational and behavioral objectives involve feelings, acceptance, appreciation, and emotional sets, much of the needed teaching has been incidental and infrequent. Furthermore, when interests, attitudes, and values have been considered at all, too often they have been *imposed* by the teacher rather than *discovered* by the pupil.

[1] *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals.* In two volumes. *Handbook I: Cognitive Domain;* edited by Benjamin S. Bloom and Others, 1956. *Handbook II: Affective Domain;* edited by D. R. Krathwohl and Others, 1964. New York: David McKay Co., Inc.

Truly creative and divergent thinking is difficult to evaluate; sometimes teachers do not even recognize it. For these and other reasons, this kind of thinking is frequently avoided or discouraged. Worse yet, in some instances it is not even permitted because of the structure of the curriculum.

Educational Objectives

The lessons in this curriculum guide are planned so as to permit a teacher of gifted pupils to help the learners develop cognitive literary concepts as a basis from which affective intellectual behavior may evolve.

As a result of the educational experiences described in the lessons, children can be expected to accomplish the following objectives:

- To be highly selective in choosing books and other materials for their reading experiences
- To identify and evaluate the inherent social and moral implications of a literary work
- To distinguish certain styles of expression and certain dramatic techniques that are characteristic of various authors
- To evaluate various aspects of human relationships in a given piece of fictional writing on the basis of (1) the behavior of the characters in the story; and (2) interactions among the characters in the story
- To identify, analyze, and synthesize the plot, theme, and organizational pattern of a story
- To describe the interdependence and mutual influences of local color, setting, mood, author's point of view, subplots, problems, conflicts, and other components of literature
- To recognize ways in which sociological environment influences the behavior of story characters and to understand how this environment can influence the behavior of people in real life

The pupils will of course accomplish most or all of these objectives in varying degrees and according to their abilities. Although guidance and encouragement are vital to the educative process, each child must be allowed to progress at his own rate and to the extent that his ability permits.

Generalizations and Concepts in the Field of Literature

The following statements point to some of the more significant generalizations and concepts that can be made regarding the progress and achievement of the gifted pupils to whom this curriculum guide applies.

1. When a child has mastered the skills of reading prose with ease and understanding, he can be guided into extending his abilities along a higher and more responsible track; namely, that of evaluating critically what he reads and writes.

2. At an early age gifted children readily identify with the characters in a story. They can also identify with the author, as well as with the author's point of view and his purposes for writing a piece of literature.

3. High-ability children in the primary grades can develop awareness and appreciation of literature by studying the following aspects of stories:

- Setting
- Plot and story pattern
- Theme
- Mood, feeling, and tone
- Characterization
- Point of view
- Writing style
- Environmental and sociological influences on the characters in the story

4. Gifted children are frequently alert to deep meanings in the stories they read; nevertheless, the teacher must be careful not to overanalyze stories. The teaching-learning structure must not be rigid.

5. Able readers are prone to make critical judgments of story situations.

6. Able readers often acquire certain personal values from the behavior of story characters and from the author's resolution of their conflicts and problems.

Curriculum Specifics: Suggested Teaching Approaches and Learning Activities

The body of this guide contains, for the most part sequences of proposed lessons. Chapter 2 explores instruction in literary and interpretive skills; Chapter 3 suggests a culminating project on research and story writing; and Chapter 4 recommends ways of developing techniques of critical analysis to heighten personal interest in reading. The curriculum specifics proposed in these three chapters are intended to involve processes that elicit higher levels of thinking.

Literary and Interpretive Skills

Chapter 2, "Literary and Interpretive Skills," the longest portion of the guide, offers opportunities for affective involvement based on and related to cognitive learnings. For purposes of organization, the literary concepts and skills are included in ten separate lessons, preceded by an introductory lesson. An attempt has been made to arrange these lessons in a logical, developmental order.

The well-organized teacher who establishes a classroom atmosphere in which divergent opinions are encouraged and respected is the kind of person who induces and fosters genuine creativity.

Culminating Project

Chapter 3, "Culminating Project," includes a suggested series of lessons that provide numerous opportunities for gifted children to use their interpretive and organizational talents in research and writing. Although the emphasis is on fiction, the pupils can apply their talents and techniques to nonfiction as well.

The gifted child often balks at research, mainly because many assignments that entail a large amount of research lack purpose and incentive. The experiences suggested in this guide are intended to be informal, natural, childlike, even whimsical; and yet ample opportunity is afforded for cognitive and affective behavior, as well as some genuinely creative composition.

Personal-Interest Reading

As children become actively and personally involved in the processes of writing their own stories, they will experience a real need to analyze critically the techniques which other authors use in creating stories.

Therefore, in Chapter 4, "Personal-Interest Reading," suggestions are made to help pupils develop techniques of critical analysis of literature.

Gifted children need to maintain a greater appreciation for literature, to become more selective in their choices of reading material, and to acquire a deeper realization of the anxieties and struggles an author faces in his attempts to create a worthwhile literary product and of the kinds of decisions he must make,

An effective personal reading program for gifted pupils must include exploring and understanding many types of literature. The positive, sensitive, critical phase of reading which is the burden of Chapter 4 should not be left to chance. The teacher should plan to meet with the pupils regularly and should *actively teach* the concepts and skills that are related in direct, intimate ways to personal-interest reading.

CHAPTER 2

Literary and Interpretive Skills

The teaching approaches and learning activities suggested in this chapter are directed toward the development of literary and interpretive skills among gifted children in grades one through three. An introductory lesson is followed by a sequence of ten lessons. Most of the lessons are divided into three sections: (1) an outline of behavioral objectives; (2) ideas for motivation and discussion, with a certain amount of pupil activity; and (3) suggestions for extending a concept or concepts by means of a variety of activities. The second and third sections in each lesson are meant to guide and assist the teacher as he works directly with the pupils and are therefore written generally in the second person. Italicized notes calling for the teacher's special attention are incorporated in the lessons. Short-form listings of recommended reading materials for young people are included in the chapter.

Introductory Lesson

The purposes of this introductory lesson are (1) to determine what the pupils already know about how stories are written; and (2) to provide instruments for self-evaluation by the pupils as they acquire literary skills and understandings during the unit proposed by this guide.

I. Differentiated Behavioral Objectives

A. Cognitive Domain

1. Knowledge: The learner lists some criteria of a good story in terms of techniques and devices used by authors.
2. Application: The learner writes an original story, consciously applying some principles of literary organization.

B. Affective Domain

1. Receiving: The learner recognizes specific criteria of good stories.
2. Responding: The learner responds to story criteria listed by his peers.

3. Valuing: The learner evaluates story criteria offered by his peers.
4. Organization: The learner organizes an original story, using criteria listed by himself and by his peers.

II. Motivation and Discussion

About five or ten minutes before meeting with the children at the reading circle, write on the board, "What do you think makes a good story?"

Ask each pupil to write an answer to the question in two or three sentences.

At the reading circle, collect the answers and read each of them to the group; be sure not to reveal who wrote them.

After all the responses have been read, ask for comments from the class. These responses should lead to additional criteria. (It is recommended that this discussion be taped for future reference.)

Inform the children that all of the criteria discussed will be typed and duplicated so that each pupil will have a copy to use.

Then tell the class about their next task. The following is illustrative of the kind of statement that might be made:

"Your next assignment will be to write a story of your own. You may write about anything you wish. The story may be long or short, funny or sad – whatever you want to do with it. This will be *your* story. You will not receive a grade, but you will use the story in several ways, which will be explained later."

NOTE: Sentence starters, pictures, topic sentences, sample titles, and the like may be used if necessary.

When the stories have been completed, collect them and inform the pupils that their papers will be duplicated and copies returned to be analyzed and evaluated from time to time.

Each story should be read to the group and evaluated in terms of the criteria that have been established.

Explain to the children that they will have opportunities during the literature unit to evaluate, revise, and rewrite their own stories as they learn more of the writing techniques used by professional authors.

During the course of the unit, some stories may undergo such major revisions that additional duplicated copies of rewritten stories may need to be prepared.

When all the stories have been discussed, Lesson One, concerning the story line in works of fiction, should be started.

(The teacher should use his own discretion as to the appropriate time for encouraging pupils to evaluate and rewrite their original stories.)

Lesson One:
Introduction to Plot – The Story Line

The following objectives, discussion topics, and pupil activities are concerned with acquainting the children with that element of plot generally called the story line.

I. Differentiated Behavioral Objectives

A. Cognitive Domain

1. Knowledge: The learner (a) recalls and uses accepted literary terminology when thinking about stories or discussing what stories are; (b) defines a story as the planned description of a series of events leading up to a problem and the way in which the problem is solved; and (c) identifies the components of a plot as he evalutes his own story or any other story.
2. Comprehension: The learner recognizes and classifies the four components of a story – setting, problem, climax, and ending or denouement.
3. Application, analysis, and synthesis: The learner organizes the retelling of a story in terms of the plot components.
4. Evaluation: The learner makes qualitative judgments about a story on the basis of its plot structure.

B. Affective Domain

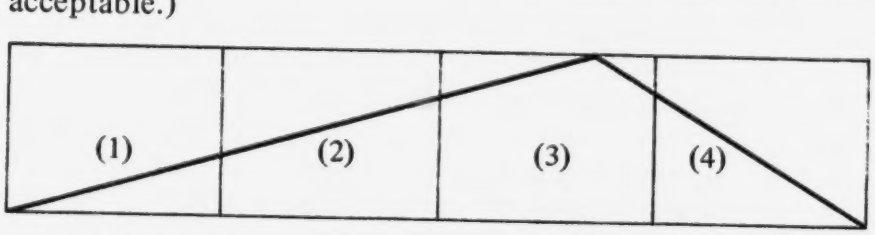
1. Receiving: The learner identifies a piece of writing as a story by its form and structure.
2. Responding: The learner offers his own opinions in discussions dealing with story form and organization.

II. Motivation and Discussion

The statements that follow are examples of those which the teacher might make to the children in his efforts to motivate, guide, and instruct. Many of these can be used as springboards for discussion.

A. Setting. "I'm going to read part of a story which is probably familiar to all of you: 'Once upon a time there was a little girl who was called Little Red Riding Hood. . . . Now one day her mother, who had been churning butter and baking cakes, said to her: "My dear, put on your red cloak with the hood to it, and take this cake and this pot of butter to your Grannie. . . . " But her grandmother lived some way off, and to reach the cottage Little Red Riding Hood had to pass through a vast, lonely forest.'"

- "What part of the story do you think this was?"
- "*How* did the author introduce the reader to the story?"
- "*Who* was in the story? *What* was she going to do? *Where* was she going?"
- "I'm going to draw a picture of the whole story on the board. Let's call this picture a diagram. Does anyone know what this long line is called? (*Story line* or any similar term would be acceptable.)



- "Using this picture or story line, who can tell us what part of 'Little Red Riding Hood' we have just talked about? Why? What do we call this part of the story?"

NOTE: Almost any story can be used, since the setting is usually established within the first few paragraphs.

B. Problem. "Any story needs a problem to be solved, because without it there would be no story. We might have simply a description or the telling of an incident, but not a story."

- "What was the *problem* in 'Little Red Riding Hood'?"
- "Where in this picture or story line would the problem be?"
- "What almost always happens in this part of any story?"

C. Climax. "Almost every story has one part, usually near the end, which is the most exciting 'chunk' of the story. The reader is so interested that he just *has* to keep reading to find out what happens or how the problem is solved. Now, where was this part in 'Little Red Riding Hood'?"

The children may not agree at all on how the problem was solved. It is this interplay of ideas and the opportunity to verbalize their thoughts that will give depth to the discussion; so let them disagree. Verbal and nonverbal communication is an important factor in this section.

D. Ending (denouement). "After the climax has been reached, the problem in the story is solved and usually the characters 'live happily ever after.' How was the problem solved in 'Little Red Riding Hood'?"

There are several different versions to this fairy tale. Each child can express what he believes to be the "ending" of the story.

III. Extending Concepts

A. At this point the pupils should be ready to handle a more detailed story line. Help them to apply it to any familiar fairy tale. Ask several children to retell in their own words the stories they have chosen; perhaps a different child can be selected for each section. Then discuss the four parts of each story as they relate to what is described.

Put the following on the chalkboard or on a chart:

SETTING	PROBLEM	CLIMAX	ENDING
Beginning (*who, when, where,* and so on).	Action starts.	Most exciting part; biggest problem.	Problem is solved. Story is closed.

B. Select a familiar novel to be discussed, and ask the children to study the story-line diagram again. "Does the novel fit into the four sections or parts of the story line? If so, how?" Have the children establish through discussion which part of the story applies to the *setting,* the *buildup* (caused by the problem or conflict), the *climax,* and the *ending*. Continue the discussion with the children to establish the concept that any story, long or short, has form and organization, which are predetermined by the author.

C. Using the same criteria, invite discussion of various types of fictional materials and media such as the following: (1) comic books of many types; (2) primers and textbooks for primary reading; (3) picture books – for example, the Caldecott Award books; (4) current television programs; and (5) motion pictures, silent films included.

D. Encourage the pupils to analyze short newspaper articles and editorials, magazine stories and articles written for young people, and other materials for the purpose of determining which are stories, which are merely narrations, and which are factual accounts. Ask them to explain the differences they have noted.

E. Return to the children the original stories they wrote during the Introductory Lesson. Ask them to evaluate their own work. Does each story have a *setting,* a *buildup,* a *climax,* and an *ending?* Encourage them to discuss their stories in small groups or "literary circles," or to work on their papers individually. They may wish to delete, revise, or add to their stories as a result of Lesson One and the discussions they have had.

F. The following reading materials are recommended for both Lesson One and Lesson Two: "The Fox and the Grapes" and other

fables of Aesop; *The North Wind and the Sun* by Jean de La Fontaine; "The Three Little Pigs" (English folktale); and *Tom Tit Tot,* prepared and illustrated by Evaline Ness.

NOTE: It may be desirable to collect the children's original stories at the end of each lesson so that they will not get lost or misplaced.

Have each child continue the evaluation of his own story as he learns the literary concepts in this guide.

Lesson Two:
Introduction to Plot – The Buildup

The buildup is one of the most important ingredients in a work of fiction, whatever the length. Ignited by a specific problem or conflict (in some instances more than one), the buildup constitutes the rising action of the story and leads to an apex of tension and vicarious involvement. That apex is the climax, and the story then dips to its close. As a rule, the ending comes soon; often it is abrupt. In some stories the climax coincides with the ending.

I. Differentiated Behavioral Objectives

A. Cognitive Domain

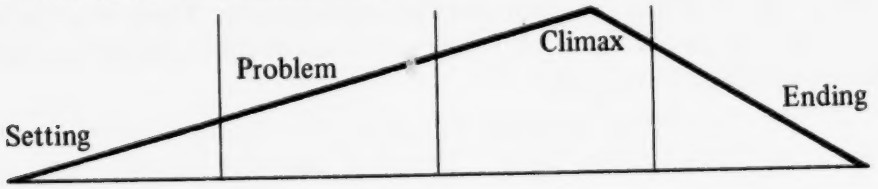
1. Comprehension: The learner identifies the buildup, or the rising action, in a story.

B. Affective Domain

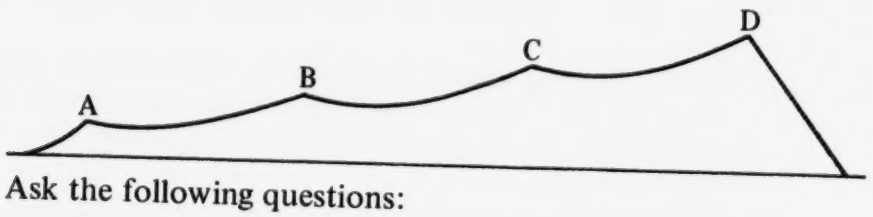
1. Receiving: The learner identifies story passages in which the reader is likely to experience an emotional change.
2. Responding: The learner describes his own emotional change as a result of identifying with story characters and situations.
3. Synthesis and organization: The learner begins to use planned "buildups" in his own creative writing and storytelling endeavors.

II. Motivation and Discussion

Ask the children: "Who remembers what the plot of a story is? What are the four main parts of a story?" On the chalkboard or on a chart, show a story line and print the names of the four major story parts that have been under discussion.



Now draw another story-line diagram, this time using curves to indicate high points of interest or tension.



Ask the following questions:

- "Do most stories have just one exciting part or several high points of interest?"
- "How would you explain a story line such as this one?"
- "What do you think points A, B, C, and D represent?"
- "Which point on the story line is the climax?"
- "How do you think the high points that are marked A, B, C, and D are related to the climax?"
- "Can you tell us what the *buildup* in a story means?"

At this point discuss the concept of the buildup. Explain that the term refers to a string of events (1) constituting the forward, upward action; and (2) leading to the climax.

III. Extending Concepts

A. Buildup of the story. The most interesting or exciting part of a story is the highest point of interest, or the climax, which takes place near or at the end. However, some important events – sometimes many – take place along the road before the climax is reached. Usually these events become more and more exciting as the story moves forward and upward to the summit.

Distribute copies of the following list to the class. Ask the pupils each to put an X in front of any of the numbered passages that might be considered an important event in the buildup of a story.

_____ 1. "I think I see buffaloes." Jim narrowed his eyes at the moving black specks in the distance. "Let's try to get one." "Do you think we could?"

_____ 2. "That's just a small herd," Jim said. "This will be easy."

_____ 3. His horse laid back his ears and shied. "They're stopping, Jim!" "They see us. The whole herd is coming this way! Go back!" shouted Jim.

_____ 4. Jim looked from the leafless trees to the buffaloes. "They won't help. Even if we climbed them, we wouldn't be safe."

_____ 5. "The herd is gaining on us." Rezin's voice shook. His face was white. "I know it. There's only one thing to do." Jim slowed his horse and dismounted. "I'll face them and turn them back."

_____ 6. Jim slapped his mount and sent it galloping on to the cottonwoods.

_____ 7. "I'm older. I should be in front." Rezin was trembling as he spoke.

_____ 8. Shaking their big horned heads, the buffaloes plunged directly toward the boys. Their sharp hoofs sounded like thunder. Jim's long upper lip tightened. He looked into the terrible, fierce eyes of the leaders.

_____ 9. "I've got to shut my eyes. . . ."

_____ 10. But Jim kept his eyes open. He saw the herd wheel in front of him. In two divisions the animals were pounding away from him. He and Rezin were like a wedge that divided them. Part of the herd was still coming forward. He looked straight into glaring eyes under cruel horns, but the beasts followed their leaders.

_____ 11. He wanted to jump up and shout. "Hold steady," he said again. That was to steady himself. "It's not over yet."

After the children have finished, ask questions such as the following:

- "Which of these passages do you think might be the climax of the story? Why?"
- "Why would passages 1, 3, 5, and 8 be considered part of the buildup, or the rising action, in this anecdote?"
- "Where do the other passages in the story belong?"
- "What happens in passage 10 which makes it a very high point in the story – perhaps the climax itself?"

Inquire of the children whether any of them recognize these passages from a book they may have read. These excerpts were taken from a chapter in *Jim Bowie: Boy with a Hunting Knife* by Gertrude Hecker Winders. This book for children contains true accounts of many exciting adventures in Jim Bowie's young life.

B. Plot. When the pupils understand the basic elements of a plot, the backbone of which is the story line, the teacher may extend the concept of plot by planning lessons based on the ideas and questions in the paragraphs that follow.

1. The plot is planned by the author; a story is seldom merely the retelling of something that happens in real life.

"What would be wrong with a story in which an author told every little detail of what a person did, thought, or said in a conversation?"

"Do you think that most incidents that happen to people follow a plan which has a beginning, a problem or middle, and an ending?" Have the children tell of some interesting experiences they have had

and let them decide whether or not they are *stories*. "Could these experiences be used in stories? Why or why not?"

2. Plot is a series of actions, not just one incident. A plot involves (a) a beginning; (b) a middle part or a series of generating circumstances; (c) a climax; and (d) an end to the conflict or interplay between opposing forces. The *conflict* is essential, for without it, without any problem, there is no plot. Every story must have a crisis, a situation of greatest suspense, which results in a climax and is followed by the *denouement,* or ending, where loose ends are tied together.

Use "The Little Red Hen," "The Three Bears," "The Three Little Pigs," and the like for discussing the concepts of buildup and opposing forces. Then conduct discussions of high points of interest represented by passages from the children's own stories and from familiar novels. Introduce the terms "generating circumstances" and "rising action"; decide how they might be shown on a story line.

3. Plot is dependent upon the delineation and development of the characters in a story. Specifically, the plot (a) is an accumulation of all the descriptions of actions which characters in the story perform; and (b) an account of the characters' words, thoughts, and feelings. The reader must be truly interested in story characters in order to identify with them. The author, therefore, must create a vivid mental picture of his story characters in order to catch and keep the reader's interest. For example, those pupils who have read either or both of Elaine L. Konigsburg's books, *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* and *Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley, and Me, Elizabeth,* will appreciate the author's skillful character development. These are fine examples of how strong characterization can exert a major influence on the plot itself.

Lesson Three:
Introduction to Plot – How Plot Is Influenced by Theme

In this lesson the pupil considers the theme of the story – how it influences the plot as well as other elements in the writing and how it affects himself in terms of meaning, feelings, and human values.

I. Differentiated Behavioral Objectives

A. Cognitive Domain

1. Comprehension and application: The learner describes the *theme* in a story by telling in a sentence the overall meaning of the story.
2. Analysis, synthesis, and evaluation: The learner tells how the *theme* of a story influences its *plot, style,* and *mood*.

B. Affective Domain

1. Receiving, responding, and valuing: The learner perceives, accepts, or rejects a story theme in terms of moral values and human relationships.
2. Organization: The learner recognizes and isolates examples of paradox, irony, and human strengths and weaknesses in story themes.
3. Characterization by value or value complex: The learner describes instances in which the action of a story has caused him to experience the same feelings and emotions as those of the characters. The learner tells how his own set of ethics and his own philosophy of life have been influenced by identifying with story characters and situations.

II. Motivation and Discussion

Put the following sentences on the board or on a chart: "Crime does not pay." "It is no sin to be poor."

Ask the pupils: "What kind of thoughts do these sentences represent? What kind of story has a lesson or a moral? Does every story have a lesson or a moral? Does every story have a message or a general purpose? How is a *moral* different from just the *message* in a story?"

Read the following sentences to the children. (If written on a chart, they can be referred to often.)

- Courage, patience, and faith can overcome the most insurmountable of obstacles.
- Patriotism is a virtue more honorable than self-preservation. "It is better to be a dead hero than a live coward."
- Good things come inevitably to those who are generous, thoughtful, and kind.
- Poverty is not unbearable for people who are courageous and resourceful.

"Do you think that each of these sentences could be considered a moral? Why or why not?" "Could any of these sentences be used to describe the purpose or meaning of a story?" "There is a literary term which tells the total meaning of a story. Who knows this term?" (theme)

NOTE: The "theme" of a story can be described simply as its "total meaning." The theme or purpose of a story usually represents a lesson or an observation by the author about life and life's experiences. Without a theme, a story would not have much significance and probably would not be much of a story.

III. Extending the Concept of "Theme"

A. Comment as follows: "Just a few traditional themes were included earlier in this lesson. Dozens of others could be listed, each with a moral, a lesson, or merely an observation of life. Most traditional themes fit into patterns that are familiar to the reader personally, even if he disagrees with the inherent implications of the themes. Many good stories deliberately violate these traditional themes, however, and sometimes even depict a morally bad theme." (For example, in *Huckleberry Finn* the main character was an habitual truant, he smoked, and he was generally what amounted to a nineteenth century juvenile delinquent. In fact, he was a lawbreaker in terms of helping Jim, an escaped slave, to avoid capture.)

B. Ask the children to tell of stories or episodes in stories wherein the theme represents an idea which, in general, is morally unacceptable or is considered counter to the human makeup. If children need guidance, the following situations may be used to stimulate further discussion:

- A rich person may be generous only because of personal vanity.
- Crime sometimes does pay.
- A person's feelings of hopelessness and futility in times of trouble or suffering are signs of weakness.
- An act of bravery can turn out to be foolish and unnecessary.

C. As the children discuss story characters who are involved in "morally bad" themes, have them explain why they think the themes are bad. Invite a variety of opinions. A healthy discussion of this type should lead to a certain amount of disagreement and, hopefully, some critical analyses of human values, morals, and characteristics. Children can begin to relate these ideas to real-life values.

D. Pass back the children's original stories. After each child has reread his own story, give the following assignments to the class:

1. Write one sentence which tells the *theme* of your own story.
2. Write the *kind of theme* you think your story has. (For example, is it a morally good one or a morally bad one? Does it teach a lesson? Is it just an observation of life? – and so on.)

E. After the pupils discuss their own story themes and the ways in which their plots have been influenced by their themes, permit rewriting or revision based on newly formulated criteria. Some of the

children may wish to alter what they had written; others may not. Then have all the stories re-collected for future reference.

F. The following books are recommended not only for good reading but particularly for use in the children's quests for interesting story themes: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Samuel L. Clemens (explain how Clemens came to adopt "Mark Twain" for his pseudonym); *The Forgotten Door,* a thought-provoking story by Alexander Key; *Harriet the Spy* by Louise Fitzhugh; *Macaroon* by Julia Cunningham; *Secret Language* by Ursula Nordstrom; and *Viollet,* another story by Julia Cunningham.

Lesson Four: Identifying and Discussing Character Traits

Lesson Four is concerned with characterization. The pupils are helped to identify and appreciate the roles that are played by the characters in a story. The importance of human behavior to the development and resolution of the plot is stressed. Opportunity is provided for the children to relate story characters to people in real life.

I. Differentiated Behavioral Objectives

A. Cognitive Domain

1. Comprehension: The learner identifies techniques used by professional writers in creating clear images of story characters.
2. Evaluation: The learner interprets changes in the personality and behavior of story characters – such changes due to environmental influences.

B. Affective Domain

1. Receiving and responding: The learner selects thoughts, words, and actions that reveal the personal traits of story characters.
2. Characterization by value or value complex: The learner imagines himself as one or more story characters and describes how he probably would have acted in given story situations.

II. Motivation and Discussion

The following are suggested questions and comments: "What makes you like certain characters in a story better than others? Which characters who possess some of these 'good' traits stand out especially in your mind? What characteristics make you dislike

certain people in stories? Everyone has certain character traits; some traits are good; some are bad; and some are 'in between.' Most stories have both good and bad characters. What stories have you read lately that portray *both* good and bad charaters?"

"When you read a story, does it take you very long to decide who the 'good guy' is? How about the 'bad guy'? When the good characters in a story are struggling against the bad characters, this struggle is or causes what writers call *conflict.* Why do you suppose authors want their characters to disagree, argue, fight, or be involved in other forms of conflict? Sometimes in a story there is conflict between a person and his *own* character traits. How do you feel after you have unintentionally hurt someone's feelings? Do you feel the same way after realizing that you have forgotten to do something very important for somebody? Why? Whom are you angry at or disgusted with? A good character in a story can have bad character traits also, and of course these will cause conflict within himself. Why do you think an author writes about self-conflict?"

III. Extending Concepts

The explanation of what happens in a story is as important as the setting, the mood, the tone, and other basic elements. The primary ingredient of any story is *people.* More explicitly, the characters act out the story. Their thoughts, emotions, actions, reactions, and words are the most significant aspects of any story. For this reason, the writer needs to create in the reader's mind very clear images of the characters. The reader, in turn, should give considerable thought and attention to the characterizations in order to understand and appreciate the story itself.

A. Ask the children to analyze a story character known to all the class by discussing the following aspects of character development: (1) physical description; (2) reactions to story situations; (3) the character's speech patterns; (4) reactions of other characters to him or her; and (5) conversations of others about the character.

B. Ask the children to select a character in the books they are reading or have recently finished reading. Have them choose passages in which the author is developing a character. Have them look for *changes* in the character's personality as the story develops. Ask: "How did a seemingly good character turn bad, and vice versa?"

C. Discuss how these character changes might occur in real life.

D. Suggest to the pupils that story characters might have acted or reacted differently in certain story situations if environmental conditions had been different. For example, pose the question: "What would a rich man in a story have been like had he been poor?"

E. For another example, propose that the hero in a given story might *not* have been kind and forgiving. "What would have been the effect on his friends? What about the theory that the Golden Rule really works – does it?"

F. Ask the pupils: "What constitutes a truly interesting personality? Is it one who is good, kind, and agreeable? How about Julius Caesar, Napoleon, Adolph Hitler, or Long John Silver? What about Harriet in *Harriet the Spy?* What do we mean by the term *personality?* What kinds of influences do strong personalities exert on the plot of a given story? What influences have strong personalities had on world history?"

G. How can a clearer image be made of the characters in the children's own stories? Is there *conflict* between their characters? – within their characters? Are both types of conflict apparent? What new criteria have the pupils learned to help them evaluate their original stories? After discussion, assign a period of class time in which the children may work on their stories. Have the papers collected at the end of the work period.

H. Especially from the viewpoint of characterization, the pupils would enjoy reading one or several of the following: *Across Five Aprils* by Irene Hunt; *The Bully of Barkham Street* by Mary S. Stolz; *The Grizzly* by Annabel and Edgar Johnson; *It's Like This, Cat,* by Emily Neville; *Shadow of a Bull* by Maia Wojciechowska; and *Up a Road Slowly,* another book by Irene Hunt.

Lesson Five:
Recognizing Feelings, Moods, and Story Tone

People behave in many different ways, and their behavior is based not on a single facet of personality but on a composite: reason, emotion, mood, instinct, imagination, memory, the will to act or not to act, and so on. A well-written story, therefore, reflects this complexity of human nature. Lesson Five draws attention especially to feelings, to the interplay of reason and emotion, and to the general tone of the story.

I. Differentiated Behavioral Objectives

A. Cognitive Domain

1. Analysis: The learner recognizes and is able to tell previously unstated assumptions regarding feelings and moods.
2. Synthesis: The learner combines various moods in writing or telling a story so as to establish an identifiable overall tone.

B. Affective Domain

1. Organization: The learner compares various human motivations in terms of reason and emotion.
2. Characterization by a value or value complex: The learner identifies his own system of values and explains the motivations for his own behavior in terms of reason and emotions.

II. Motivation and Discussion

The following questions, comments, and assignments are suggested. Elicit frank opinions from as many of the children as possible.

"Why do you think authors let their characters do or say things that may be foolish or thoughtless instead of always doing or saying what is reasonable and intelligent?"

"In real life, do we *always* do or say what we know to be the most reasonable and intelligent way of acting or speaking?"

"What do you think causes people in real life to do the things they do?"

"The author lets his readers know how a character feels by what he lets the character do or say. He lets the reader 'discover' what a character is like or how he feels by telling what the character is doing or saying."

"Read the following passages and choose a word from the list to describe the mood or feeling which you think is represented in each passage. Put an X in front of the word of your choice. Be ready to tell why you chose the word you did."

1. Paulette marched out of Miss Brown's room with the children's laughter echoing in her ears. Martin Seebrook called to her, "Hey, Frenchie, say 'thirty thousand thirsty thistles.'"
   _____ a. Fear
   _____ b. Embarrassment
   _____ c. Warm friendship
2. Paulette stared at the logs. "Yes, I have really done it," she said aloud. "If I have to tell something I am thankful for, I shall get a zero. What is there to be thankful for in this hateful place?"
   _____ a. Anger
   _____ b. Fear
   _____ c. Homesickness
3. Martin put up his hand to speak. "Ma'am, I liked best what Frenchie said. I never thought of being thankful for things like arms and legs, but I am."
   _____ a. Kindness
   _____ b. Friendliness
   _____ c. Jealousy

4. Martin's hand shot up. "Can't we call that Frenchie's joyful noise?" A hearty bomb of laughter exploded in the room, but this time the laughter was different. This time Paulette could laugh, too.

   _____ a. Feeling sorry for Frenchie
   _____ b. Sense of humor
   _____ c. Acceptance of Frenchie

III. Extending Concepts

The items that follow may be used to stimulate further pupil discussion and activity:

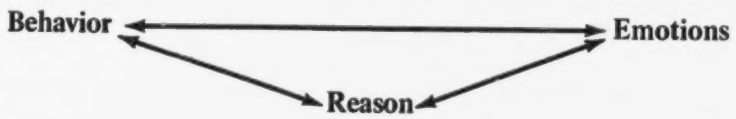
A. "Do you find yourself pretending to be a certain character or even several characters in a story? This is called 'identifying' with a character. Who can give examples of identifying with persons described in books you have read recently?"

"When an author succeeds in getting the reader to identify with story characters, he *leads* the reader toward the mood he wishes to establish. Can you think of examples of emotions you have felt while reading certain stories?"

"Why do you think that an author doesn't tell the reader immediately how the characters feel? Why does he deliberately hold back information that the reader is curious about?"

B. "It has been said that people do most of the things they do because of two factors – their *reason* and their *emotions.* What is your opinion of this observation?"

Discuss the interactions implied by the following diagram:



"Do you believe that a person's emotions can influence his reasoning as well as his behavior? Would you say that a person's reasoning might influence his emotions and his behavior? Think of examples that illustrate mutual influences between emotions, reason, and behavior."

Invite the children to cite from books they have already read, or are reading now, specific examples that illustrate (1) actions motivated by reason; and (2) actions motivated by emotion. Ask them to evaluate the actions in terms of the consequences.

"Do you think that when an author is attempting to establish a certain mood or atmosphere in a story, he depends mostly on a reader's reason, or mostly on his emotions?"

"Do people in other occupations use emotion as part of their strategy? What about a salesman or a politician – or a schoolteacher?"

C. Have the children make judgments about their original stories in terms of actions motivated by their *own* reason or emotions. Ask them to tell which factors (reason or emotion) had the most influence in establishing the moods of their stories.

D. The following books are well adapted to the cotent of this lesson: *Brown Rabbit: Her Story* by Evangeline F. Morse; *Evan's Corner* by Elizabeth Hill; *Jazz Man* by Mary H. Weik; *Maggie Rose: Her Birthday Christmas* by Ruth Sawyer; and *Oh Lord, I Wish I Was a Buzzard* by Polly Greenberg.

Lesson Six:
The Fun of Discovery

Arousing the reader's sense of discovery is one of the most attractive qualities of good fiction writing. Elements of suspense, mystery, and surprise all contribute to this quality. Because young people are naturally curious, the emphasis in this lesson is on their love of discovery.

I. Differentiated Behavioral Objectives

A. Cognitive Domain

1. Comprehension: The learner finds that *discovery* is a technique used by authors in building interest and excitement in a story. He learns to describe this technique.
2. Application: The learner (a) identifies examples of discovery in man's daily life; and (b) uses discovery as a strategy in his own creative thinking and writing.

II. Motivation and Discussion

Questions such as the following might "open doors" to the idea of *discovery* in literature:

"Have you ever gone to a movie when you arrived a few minutes before it ended?"

"Could seeing the last part of a motion picture spoil the story for you if you stayed and saw it from the beginning? Why or why not?"

"Why do children enjoy hunting for Easter eggs or playing 'hide-and-go-seek'? How do you feel when someone reveals the location of a hidden object before you find it?"

"What if someone tells the answer to a problem or a riddle just before you get it figured out?"

"How many of you have ever read the last few pages of a story before reading it all the way through? Do you think this is a desirable thing to do? Why or why not?"

"Do you believe that people usually enjoy finding out things for themselves more than just having someone tell them? Why do authors often use 'the fun of discovery' as a writing technique?"

III. Extending the Concept

A. Call for examples of suspense-building methods and surprise techniques used by authors.

B. Ask the pupils: "How do people in other kinds of occupations and professions make effective use of planned discovery devices?" Discuss television programs, commercials, "kiddie shows," movie serials, and daily comic strips.

C. Return the class's original stories and ask the children to evaluate their own use of *discovery* as a strategy in writing. Perhaps they will need additional time to work on their stories in order to use the "fun of discovery" technique more effectively or to apply the technique if they have not already done so. Collect all the stories for future evaluation and reference.

D. In reading stories such as the following, the children will have ample opportunity for recognizing and enjoying the discovery technique: *Brighty of the Grand Canyon* by Marguerite Henry; *The Bushbabies* by William Stevenson; *The Incredible Journey* by Sheila Burnford; *The King of the Wind,* another book by Marguerite Henry; and *Old Yeller,* a favorite with many young people, by Fred Gipson.

Lesson Seven:
Figurative and Descriptive Language

The use of appropriate figures of speech and colorful, atmospheric description adds much to the effectiveness of literary works, particularly story writing and poetry. The intent of this lesson is to help gifted pupils to appreciate and apply the creative elements of figurative and descriptive language.

I. Differentiated Behavioral Objectives

A. Cognitive Domain

1. Knowledge and comprehension

   a. The learner identifies examples of similes, metaphors, and other types of figurative language in prose or poetry. Also, he is able to cite examples of exaggeration.

   b. The learner identifies examples of purely descriptive language, including the technique of "local color."

2. Application
   a. The learner consciously uses similes, metaphors, and other types of figurative language in his oral and written stories.
   b. The learner writes descriptions using direct, colorful language. He uses "local color" as one of several techniques. (Figures of speech, as such, are kept to a minimum.)

B. Affective Domain

1. Receiving and responding: The learner selects and reads books that feature excellent creative writing – craftsmanship that employs both figurative and descriptive language.
2. Valuing: The learner evaluates figurative and descriptive techniques both in the stories of professional writers and in his own stories.

II. Motivation and Discussion

A. Figurative language. Ask the pupils: "What is meant by the following sentences?"

- The party was not a surprise because Bob spilled the beans.
- The boys nearly died laughing.

"Did Bob really spill some beans? Were the boys really near death? These and other expressions which most of us use from time to time are called *figures of speech.* We sometimes refer to this kind of speaking or writing as *figurative language.* Can you think of other examples of figurative language?"

Explain to the class: "In order to make characters seem like 'real people,' authors let them talk naturally; that is, in the way people usually talk with each other in real life. Most things we say may not be completely true in the literal sense; quite unconsciously we use popular, traditional figures of speech. But these 'figures' do help others to understand us more clearly."

Have the children study the following phrases from a classroom pocket chart. Ask them to tell why each one is *not* completely true:

- I will go out into the world.
- Mr. Murdy had a face like a rock.
- She took the girl into a room full of yarn.
- Her nose must have been a foot long.
- I have always been weaving.
- Steve was as tall as a tree.
- That is all you know.

1. Similes: Explain to the children: "We have all read stories and other material in which the authors gave such good descriptions that we could almost 'see' the people or things in the printed words. Have you noticed that authors sometimes create a clear mental picture of something by comparing it to something entirely different? For example, 'She sat there, quiet as a mouse.' Can you think of other examples? What are comparisons of this kind called?"

Write *simile* on the board and have the pupils say the word aloud. "When a writer uses similes such as 'white as snow' or 'hot as fire.' what does he assume that the reader already knows?"

"Writers often compare things or actions to other familiar things or actions in order to produce a clearer picture. What do you think the author of the following similes had in mind when he used them?"

- Quick as a wink
- Strong as an ox

2. Metaphors: Review what a simile is. "What 'clue' is used to help the reader recognize a phrase as a simile?" (Remind the pupils that the words "like a," "as a," and "than a" are used between the two things being compared.)

"Another way to describe things clearly is actually to call them something else or to use words that stand for some other thing, quality, or action. The words chosen by the author should be familiar to the reader. Examples of this device are 'frozen with fear,' 'green with envy,' 'burst into laughter.' What are these expressions called?" Write *metaphor* on the board, and have the children repeat it aloud. "Can you think of other metaphors?"

"What does 'frozen with fear' mean? Does someone really freeze into a statue of ice when he is frightened? What does 'green with envy' mean? Do people really turn green when they are envious? What does 'burst into laughter' mean? Does the person who laughs suddenly and heartily really burst wide open? Why do you think this type of figurative language is used by so many authors? Who can explain the difference between a *simile* and a *metaphor?*"

At this point, involve the class in oral or written evaluative exercises that will help the pupils to appreciate the value of metaphors and to use them properly.

"Authors have a way of writing certain well-chosen words when they want the reader's mind to form clear pictures. Statements that contain such words cause you to 'see' something quite different from what the words actually mean. Study the following phrases from the pocket chart. Think about how the metaphor is used in each phrase. Briefly tell what you think the author means in each case."

- His eyes dropped out of his head!
- She turned green with envy.
- He put his foot in his mouth.
- The doctor was tied up.
- Someone spilled the beans!
- The wind caught the sails.
- Lights flashed in his eyes.
- Bells rang in his ears.
- A bright yellow flame shot out of the spout.

B. Descriptive language. Among the techniques of purely descriptive language, in which figures of speech are kept to a minimum, is "local color." Ask the pupils to listen to this passage and to try to decide for themselves what kind of place or region the words are describing:

> The monkeys in the treetops stopped their chattering; the capybara ceased his scurrying and stood quietly, trembling. The herons, knee-deep in water along the riverbank, took flight. Farther up the bank, an ugly jacare cayman slithered deeper into the mud, invisible in the dim moonlight.

"What *words* help you to know that this setting may be that of a jungle? Writers use special words to make clear a certain image, scene, or situation. This method is sometimes called 'adding local color' to a story. When your stories are passed out at the end of the lesson, find out whether or not you have used this method. Also, look for examples of local color in the books you are now reading."

Explain to the class that there are various other ways of using descriptive language. One of these is "straight description" (or "general color"). Examples are "the blue sky," "a tiny dog with a stubby tail," "the sagging old house." Another technique is that of using words that create "atmosphere." Examples are "the whirring wind"; "a silent lake, hidden away in the dark hills"; "the ragged little boy stood alone on the deserted playground." Atmospheric words can be used for a number of purposes and are almost always found in "local color." Ask the pupils to look for literary passages that use straight description and passages that use atmospheric writing and to apply these methods in passages of their own.

III. Extending Concepts

A. Figurative language. Ask questions such as the following to spur discussion about figurative writing:

"How does an author make characters and situations in stories seem real to the reader? Do you become more interested in a character if you know what he looks like? What are some other ways in which we get a clear picture of a character?"

"An author may say one thing; but because of when, where, or how it is said, he may mean something else. He does this to create an *image.* What do you think the author means by each of the following sentences?"

- "This is not a man's world," Clayte said, "and it's not going to be a man's picnic, either."
- Annabelle felt little goose pimples come out on her backbone.
- "Hey, umpire!" he shouted. "You blind?"
- Was Dood's face red!

B. Descriptive language. The following activities, questions, and topics are suggested for pupil involvement in descriptive writing.

1. "In the paragraph shown here, underline all of the *descriptive* words, or words that are not absolutely necessary to tell what Dan and Tom see."

> As Dan and Tom walked slowly home from a long Cub Scout meeting, they suddenly froze in their tracks with amazement at the startling sight before them. Even though they had heard and read some wild stories about space ships, they were hardly prepared for this!

Now have the children use descriptive words to tell or write what they think Dan and Tom have seen.

2. Obviously, any storyteller needs to create clear, vivid images of his characters and their moods, emotions, and feelings. In books, this 'image building' can be accomplished with descriptive words. How is this done in dramatic portrayals, such as motion pictures or plays?"

"What would be the advantages or disadvantages of having a story *performed* instead of told or written?"

"How might an actor's personal characteristics affect his portrayal of certain story characters?"

"What is meant by *type casting?"*

"What do directors of movies and plays do? Why are they so important to dramatic productions?"

C. Self-improvement. Ask how the children might improve their own stories by applying the ideas they have discussed and learned in this lesson. Class time should be given to those pupils who wish to rework their own stories for the purpose of using, or making better use of, figurative and descriptive language. A small group may wish to start a class booklet of figures of speech and descriptive words and phrases.

D. Recommended reading. The reading materials that follow abound in figurative and descriptive language: *Blue Willow* by Doris Gates; *Chitty-Chitty-Bang-Bang* by Ian Fleming; *Courage of Sarah*

Noble by Alice Dalgliesh; "The Elephant's Child," a tale taken from *Just So Stories,* by Rudyard Kipling; *Hailstones and Halibut Bones* by Mary O'Neill; *Hurry Home, Candy* by Meindert DeJong; *Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell; *Listen, Rabbit* by Aileen L. Fisher; *Strawberry Girl* by Lois Lenski; *Tom Tit Tot,* prepared and illustrated by Evaline Ness; and *The Wheel on the School,* another book by Meindert DeJong.

Lesson Eight: Point of View

In this lesson the pupils learn the purpose and function of "point of view," which is basic to the telling of a story. They are introduced to two major types.

I. Differentiated Behavioral Objectives

A. Cognitive Domain

1. Knowledge: The learner recognizes the point of view from which a story is written.
2. Synthesis: The learner organizes his own writing in such a way that it has a definite, clear, predetermined point of view.

B. Affective Domain

1. Responding: The learner is able to appreciate the merits of particular points of view.
2. Characterization by a value or value complex: The learner judges problems and situations in real life from several points of view.

II. Motivation and Discussion

The following questions, explanations, and assignments are suggested:

A. Author-observer point of view. "How would you describe a mountain if you were standing on the very top of it? How would you describe the same mountain if you were standing at the foot of it? Why are these descriptions of the same mountain so different?"

"Do you think the point of view has anything to do with story writing? Whose point of view is usually represented in most stories? Is it the main character's point of view, or is it the storyteller's point of view? Why do you think an author usually tells the whole story from one point of view?"

"Have you noticed that many stories seem to have been written by someone who just happened to be there watching when the story

took place? It is as though the author had been an *observer.* In this type of story, the author-observer tells what happens, what each character says and does. The author-observer usually writes in terms of what happens to the main character in his story, but he gives the impression that he doesn't know what is going to happen next. In a story of this kind, do you sometimes feel as though you, too, are watching it take place and not just reading about it? If so, the author has been successful in his attempts to tell the story from the point of view of an observer or a witness."

Ask those children who are reading mystery stories to tell from whose point of view they believe that each story is told, and why. (This analysis should lead the pupils naturally into further discussion of stories told from the point of view of an author-observer.)

B. Omniscient point of view. "In some stories the author doesn't limit his observations just to what happens to the main characters; he observes all the others. Also, he might write as though he knows what is happening in Chicago, in London, or in any place at all. Still further, he can tell you at any time what his story people are thinking and how they feel about things. How many of you are reading books written in this manner? How many of you have written your stories from this point of view?"

"This literary method is called the *omniscient* point of view. The author appears to know everything about all of his story people, and it is a very common method of storytelling."

Ask a pupil to look up the meaning and origin of the word *omniscient.* His findings should be basically similar to the following:

> OMNISCIENT, adjective (from Latin: *Omni-*, "all," + *scientia,* "knowledge") – having complete or infinite knowledge, awareness, or understanding; perceiving all things.

III. Extending Concepts

A. Have each child select a book (which he has read or is reading) written from the *omniscient* point of view, and ask him to be ready to give reasons for his choice.

B. Likewise, have each child select a book written from an *observer's* point of view, and ask him to be ready to give reasons for his choice.

C. Ask the pupils: "Which type of story would an author probably write if the tale were based on a personal experience?"

D. Have the children read their own stories orally, either in small literary circles or to the whole class. Encourage them to decide from whose point of view each story has been written. Perhaps some will want to change their stories so they are written from a different point of view.

E. The following stories will be helpful to the pupils in their study of point of view: two by Robert Lawson – *Ben and Me* and *Mr. Revere and I;* and three by Mary S. Stolz – *The Bully of Barkham Street, The Dog on Barkham Street,* and *The Noonday Friends.*

Lesson Nine: First- and Third-Person Stories

The intent of Lesson Nine is to combine what the children have learned about point of view with the concept of "person" as applied to creative writing.

I. Differentiated Behavioral Objectives

A. Cognitive Domain

1. Comprehension and analysis
   a. The learner distinguishes between first- and third-person stories.
   b. The learner identifies the character from whose point of view a story is told.
2. Application: The learner uses what he has learned in stories of his own.

B. Affective Domain

1. Awareness and responding: The learner describes a given story situation from the point of view of the characters in it.
2. Responding: The learner discusses the intellectual and aesthetic qualities of literature as means of personal enrichment and social understanding.
3. Organization: The learner is better able to identify characteristics of (a) types of stories; and (b) styles of authors.

II. Motivation and Discussion

NOTE: Prior to an in-depth teaching of this lesson, the children will need to understand first-, second-, and third-person grammatical relationships. The chart that follows can be used to teach or review these concepts.

PERSON CHART

First person singular	I
Second person singular	you
Third person singular	he, she, it
First person plural	we
Second person plural	you (more than one)
Third person plural	they

After the teacher has determined that the functions and relationships of "person" in creative expression are thoroughly understood by the class, the following questions, topics, and activities can be utilized:

A. Third-person stories. Ask the pupils: "When the author tells *about* people and events in a story, which person do you think is used? How can you tell which person is used in a story?"

"Is it possible to have a story written in the third person even though there is no conversation in the story, as in some animal stories?"

"A story in the third person is told from the *observer's* or from the *omniscient* point of view; in either case, the narrative tells what he, she, it, and they did or saw. Would a third-person story be told from *outside* or *inside* the story? Would we call the author or storyteller an *outsider* in this instance? Why?"

Ask a group of children to select from their library books or reading textbooks certain passages that illustrate the use of the third person. As the passages are read, have the rest of the class decide whether or not the story was written in the third person.

B. First-person stories. Say to the class: "Let us suppose that a story is written as though the author were a participant; that is, one of the characters in it. In which person would it need to be written?"

"What is another term for first-person stories? Can you think of examples of "I" stories, or first-person stories?" (*Ben and Me, Black Beauty, Island of the Blue Dolphins,* and the like.) "Would these be told by an *outsider* or by an *insider?* Why? Stories written in this manner use the *author-participant* point of view. But who really is telling any story? Why do you suppose an author would want to tell the story from the inside, as though someone within the story were telling it?" (The reader identifies with the character, who is apparently telling the story and taking part in the action. The reader experiences what the author-participant experiences. Like the author, he is an insider.)

"Would the author-participant need to be the hero or main character in the story? Think of stories in which the character who seems to be telling the story is *not* the hero. Do you believe that a first-person story would be any easier to write than other types?" Invite the children to give their reasons.

"Try retelling some familiar fairy tales or fables as first-person stories." Have different children tell the same story from the points of view of *different* characters in the story. For example, "The Hare and the Tortoise" could be told by the tortoise as the winner or by the hare as the loser. Encourage creative embellishments to these stories.

III. Extending Concepts

A. Have each child recall an incident that has happened to him and ask him to write it down or tell about it orally, using the third person as though the incident happened to someone else.

B. Make the following assignment: Each pupil should write a first-person account of what he did and thought about from the time he woke up until the time he arrived at school on the day of the assignment. Encourage the class to try hard to include any thoughts involving decisions, reactions to others, and drifting thoughts.

C. The following two books will be found particularly helpful in this lesson: *Black Beauty* by Anna Sewell, and *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* by Elaine L. Konigsburg.

Lesson Ten:
Analysis of Mystery Stories

The purpose of this final lesson in Chapter 2 is to acquaint the pupils with the main characteristics of mystery stories and to involve the class in analyzing and applying typical techniques that are used in creating stories of this genre.

I. Differentiated Behavioral Objectives

A. Cognitive Domain

1. Knowledge: The learner becomes acquainted with the essential characteristics of mystery stories. He is able to distinguish readily between this kind of creative writing and other kinds.
2. Evaluation: The learner makes judgments about mystery stories in terms of such qualities as suspense, logical clues, and appropriate outcomes.

B. Affective Domain

1. Responding: The learner reads mystery stories voluntarily for recreation.
2. Organization: The learner writes one or more mystery stories utilizing such techniques as suspense, hidden clues, and themes of moral justice.

II. Motivation and Discussion

The questions and explanations that follow are meant to help the children become knowledgeable about mystery story writing:

"How many of you have read and enjoyed mystery stories? Can you name a few? What is it about these stories that makes them fun

to read? Are most mystery stories usually easy to follow? Why does an author use a simple, direct style?"

"Remember that nearly every story has one main problem to be solved. When do we usually learn about this problem in most stories? When do we learn about the problem in most mystery stories? What kind of problem is usually involved in a mystery story?" (Example: some form of crime, or the threat of an illegal or violent act.)

"What do you find yourself, the reader, doing about the crime as you follow the adventures of the hero in a mystery story? Why does an author give the reader just a few clues at a time? When you finish a mystery story, you can usually think back and see how you might have solved the mystery. In fact, an alert reader can sometimes figure out who committed the crime before he actually finds out for sure. Why is it important for the author to be 'fair' to the reader in providing clues?"

Point out to the class that most mysteries have the following characteristics:

- The main problem, or "catastrophe," is identified at the beginning of the story.
- The reader has the experience of accompanying the main character in going through the steps of looking for the solution to the problem.
- The reader is given an opportunity to solve the crime (or problem) himself by discovering clues that are buried in the story.

Encourage the children to apply these criteria to mystery stories with which they are familiar.

III. Extending Concepts

The following topics and activities are recommended for pupil involvement:

A. "Think about the mystery stories you have read. What made them enjoyable to read? What were your feelings toward the 'bad guys'? Have you ever experienced a kind of friendship for, or felt sorry for, a story character who turned out to be guilty of a crime? Why do you suppose an author gives the villain in a story *some* desirable traits?"

B. "Choose one of your favorite mystery stories. Use the same general plot, but change the sequence of events so that the guilty character is free and the hero is accused. Describe the feelings of both. Change the ending so that the problem is solved in another way. Describe how the characters feel and what they say and do because of the changes in events."

C. "Are the solutions to most mystery stories logical and reasonable?"

D. "Can you remember reading a mystery where the solution to the problem seemed unreasonable or unbelievable, or just too much of a coincidence?" (Have the pupils look up the meaning of *deus ex machina.* Comment on this device.)

E. Ask the children who have written mystery stories to read them to the class. Evaluate them on the basis of the criteria developed in this lesson. Some children may want to work together in discussion circles, evaluating either their own stories or published stories they have already read. Provide class time for further in-depth discussion.

F. A number of good mystery and detective stories for young people are available. Among them are the following: *The Alligator Case* by William Pene Du Bois; *Egypt Game* by Zilpha K. Snyder; *Encyclopedia Brown* stories (a series of books in which a boy detective is the hero) by Donald J. Sobol; and *Freddy the Detective* by Walter R. Brooks.

CHAPTER 3

Culminating Project

The twofold purpose of this chapter is to suggest ways in which gifted pupils in grades one, two, and three may have ample opportunity (1) to use basic tools and techniques of research; and (2) to write stories of their own creation, drawing from the information they have gathered.

Although fiction is the literary type given the greatest amount of attention here, the pupils may be invited to write nonfiction also. The teacher should give additional help, as needed, to those children who try the latter type.

Presentation and Application

The manner of presentation by the teacher and application by the pupils is basically similar to that adopted in Chapter 2. As before, attention is given to the cognitive and affective domains, and most of the activity is guided by a sequence of lessons.

I. Differentiated Behavioral Objectives

A. Cognitive Domain

1. Knowledge: The learner seeks specific information from various sources in the planning of vicarious literary experiences.
2. Comprehension: The learner selects and lists facts that are relevant to his topic.
3. Application: The learner utilizes information he has acquired in making his story authentic and believable.
4. Synthesis: The learner predetermines the setting, the characters, the plot, and other important elements of his story and utilizes them in his writing.

B. Affective Domain

1. Valuing and organizing: The learner predetermines and consciously incorporates elements of effective story writing in his own creative effort.

2. Characterization: The learner writes a story in which "good" wins out over "evil."

II. Motivation and Discussion

The groundwork for research and story writing should be laid by appropriate instruction and lively class discussion.

Impress upon the children the value of in-depth preparation for good writing. Explain to them that doing research need not be dull and tedious at all; that, on the contrary, if it is meaningful to the idea of the story, it can be pleasant, stimulating, and often exciting. Use questions, "springboard" items, and statements similar to the following:

- "How does an author become sufficiently informed about a topic to be able to write a book or a story or an article about it?"
- "Are most of our learning experiences firsthand, or are most of them secondhand?" Develop the term *vicarious.*
- "What is meant by *vicarious experience?* Why is this element so important to the writing and reading of stories?"
- "Do you believe that you could become an 'expert' on some topic by reading about it?"
- "*Research* is the term we use to describe – in one short but useful word – finding, reading, viewing, collecting, and otherwise acquiring information *about* a particular topic."

III. Applying the Concepts

Have the pupils review and discuss briefly the essentials of good story writing.

A. Story project. Plan a series of lessons in which the children participate in meaningful, useful activities involving research and original writing. The following sequence is suggested:

Lesson 1: "SELECT a topic. Narrow it down; be specific."

Lesson 2: "GATHER books containing information on the topic of your choice (encyclopedias, books on science and geography, and other sources – from the classroom, from the school library, from the public library, from your home, and so forth)."

Lesson 3: "LOOK for needed information by (a) using the table of contents; (b) using the index; and (c) skimming the book (or section or article)."

Lesson 4: "READ your sources of information carefully. Take notes as the need arises."

Lesson 5: "LIST ten or more facts which you consider particularly important to your story. Give the source for each."

Lesson 6: "DECIDE on the *kind* of story you want to write; for example, humorous, adventure, mystery, real-life. Also, choose your point of view."

Lesson 7: "PLAN your story." A large chart would be appropriate at this stage. The following may be listed on the chart as aids or reminders for the class:

- Who will be my main character?
- When and where shall my story begin? (Setting, introduction)
- What will be the problem in my story?
- How will I tell about my problem? (Action)
- How shall the problem be solved? (Climax)
- How shall my story end? (Conclusion)

Lesson 8: "WRITE your story. Remember the main parts: the setting, the problem, the climax, and the ending. Hold on to the central theme. Make your characters come alive. By choosing your words and phrases wisely, establish the kind of mood and atmosphere you want the story to have."

Lesson 9: "ILLUSTRATE your story in whatever way you think would be helpful."

Lesson 10: "MAKE a table of contents. Include such entries as the introduction, if any; titles of chapters or parts if your story is long; list of illustrations; glossary of terms, if needed; and the bibliography."

B. Critical analysis. Have the children read their stories to one another. Then let the class analyze and evaluate the stories in terms of the skills and understandings acquired thus far in this unit.

Problem Areas

After the projects have been completed and the appraisals have been made, it would be advantageous to hold class discussions and teacher-pupil conferences regarding certain problems or difficulties the children have experienced in this phase of the unit. The teacher should (1) encourage questions from the pupils; (2) give direct help to those children who have manifested particular weaknesses and have encountered "stumbling blocks" in carrying out their projects; and (3) make some practical suggestions that will benefit the class as a whole.

CHAPTER 4

Personal-Interest Reading

One of the most important objectives of teaching literature to children and youth is to develop in them a critical sense – an ability to analyze the techniques used by professional writers and to evaluate literary works as to their strengths and weaknesses. When young people are thus helped to become good critics, they are more discriminating in their choice of personal-interest reading; they take greater pleasure and find deeper meaning in what they read; and they are apt to continue their quest for good literature in the years to follow. For many, the "good reading" habit will be lifelong.

Chapter 4 pursues this objective for the benefit of gifted pupils in grades one through three. The material presented here is divided into two sections: (1) lessons involving literature skills and personal-interest reading activities; and (2) a proposed outline for the evaluation of literature.

Lessons in Literature

As in chapters 2 and 3, both the cognitive and the affective domains should be explored during the development and application of the lessons. The lesson activities in this phase pertain to the development of literature skills and the improvement of reading for personal interest.

I. Literature Skills

A. Developing the imagination. The following lessons have to do with skills that develop the pupils' imagination:

1. Recognizing good descriptive and figurative language
2. Recognizing mood and feeling, or the general tone of a story
3. Understanding and appreciating sensory impressions created by the author
4. Visualizing characters and incidents in a story and identifying with them

B. Understanding plot and form. The following lessons have to do with skills that help the pupils to understand the plot and form of a story:

1. Following a sequence of events in a work of fiction
2. Recognizing basic parts of a story plot or pattern
3. Identifying the main problem in a given story and predicting the outcome
4. Exploring other possibilities in the development and resolution of a story by changing the plot, the climax, or the ending

C. Relating to story situations. The following lessons have to do with skills that help the children to relate personally to story situations:

1. Comparing real and vicarious experiences
2. Distinguishing between real and make-believe (or between the possible and the improbable or impossible)
3. Predicting outcomes of story situations
4. Making inferences from dialogue and narrative

II. Personal-Interest Reading Activities

Gifted children in the lower elementary grades are not ready to write long, formal book reviews, nor would they gain much from laboring over such lengthy reports; but there are many possible activities that can enhance their skills in reading literature. Several of these activities are suggested here.

A. Using a sample plot lesson. An exemplary plot sheet can be used at the reading circle to guide discussion among the pupils and between the teacher and the pupils. The sheet can be duplicated and copies given to the children. The sheet states: "Answer the following questions about your book"; and these are the questions listed on it:

1. How do you know who the main character is?
2. In what part of the book is the setting provided? Does it change? In what part or parts? Why do you think it changes?
3. What is the main problem or action in your book? How do you know it is the main problem?
4. How was the problem solved? How did the solving of the problem change or influence the lives of those people who were involved?
5. How did the story end? Would you have made it end differently? Why? – or why not?

B. Building comprehension skills. The following specific tasks have been found effective in helping children to develop skills in

reading comprehension. As under II-A, these suggestions are addressed to the pupils:

1. See if you can find the sentence or paragraph that best summarizes the whole story. What is the *theme* of your story?
2. Find three sentences that tell the most important things that happened in the story. In what part of the story did these sentences appear? How did they help in building the plot?
3. Use any medium to illustrate the main idea of the story; for example, puppetry, diorama, a chart, a creative art activity, poetry, a monologue, a dialogue, a flannel board story, role playing, a tape recording, a radio or television program.
4. Describe or write a different ending to the story you have just finished reading.
5. Explain in what way two of the characters in the story were alike. Explain in what way they were different.
6. Tell how the characters changed during the course of the story and why they changed.
7. Find the sentences and words that best describe a certain character or a certain setting.
8. Locate passages that reveal the author's point of view.
9. Tell how you or someone else would have written the same story from a different point of view.

C. Making short book reviews. Although long, formal book reviews should not be required, it is beneficial to let the children tell about the books they have read. A good technique is to have the pupils complete the outline presented here. It not only serves as a set of useful data and notes; it can also be used for keeping individual records. The outline follows:

BOOK REVIEW

Title _____

Author _____

Publisher _____

Date published _____

Other books (written by the same author) which I have read _____

_____

_____

Briefly tell about the book you have read. You may use the following guidelines. Spaces are provided for any notes you want to make.

- *Setting.* (Who? Where? When? What? Why?)_____
  _____
  _____
- *Problem.* (State the problem; describe one main event and the buildup leading to the solution of the problem.)_____
  _____
  _____
  _____
- *Climax.* (How was the problem finally solved?)_____
  _____
- *Ending.* (How did the characters in the story react when the problem was solved?)_____
  _____

D. Keeping records. Keeping records of the many books read by the gifted child enables him to review the *types* of books he has read; helps him to become more selective in his choice of books; and, further, provides excellent opportunities for role playing, guessing games involving and relating to radio and television programs, panel discussions, debates, oral reviews, and the like.

It is recommended that 3″ x 5″ cards be used for these pupil records. The cards can be prepared in a simple, basic manner. The items shown in the following illustration should be adequate for obtaining the essential information desired:

Pupil's name _____
Book title _____
Author _____
Date started _____ Date completed _____
Comments about the book _____
_____
_____
(If you need more room for comments, use the back of the card.)

E. Playing book and story games. Certain constructive games can be played by the children for purposes of evaluation, reinforcement, and stimulation to widen their range of reading. For instance, the 3″ x 5″ record card shown under II-D can be used in a "game"

type of evaluation for the whole class or for a small group. Several kindred games might develop in this activity: "What Book Is This?" "Guess My Book!" "Who Is the Author of This Book?" "What Is This Book About?" and so on. A specific technique for this type of game would be this: After all the pupils have filled out their cards, have each child turn his card over and write *one good question* identifying an important aspect in the plot of the book he has read. Examples of such questions are the following:

- "In what Newbery award-winning book were a young girl and her brother left on an island alone?"
- "In Ian Fleming's *Chitty-Chitty-Bang-Bang,* what character was portrayed by the use of personification?"

If the question asks for a title, the answer would already be on the other side of the card. If it asks for an answer for which there is no information already on the card, the answer should be written below the question. Gifted children will make up their own variations to this game. Let them explore many different approaches and solutions. The art of asking meaningful questions, however, must be continually practiced.

Evaluation

Appraisal of a book or short story is an important factor in motivating a child to extend and broaden his interests in personal reading. If he acquires the habit of evaluating the essential qualities of good literature, he will be more apt to make wise choices and he will want to read more extensively.

Moreover, as gifted pupils develop a basic understanding of the lessons taught in the literature sections of this unit, an ongoing evaluation is necessary for the purposes of the guide. The suggested outline that follows, therefore, has a twofold purpose: (1) to guide the pupils' activities and discussions during the course of this unit; and (2) to motivate the pupils to continue their literary explorations throughout their growing years and into adult life.

PROPOSED OUTLINE FOR THE EVALUATION OF LITERATURE

(Book-length stories or short stories)

1. Does the story have a good plot?
   a. Is the plot well constructed?
   b. Is the plot clear?
   c. Use a story-line diagram.

   d. Remember that a story is supposed to identify a problem and then solve it.

2. What makes a good word picture?
   a. Why is description important?
   b. How does the author use the reader's past experiences?
   c. Why are similes and metaphors useful both to the author and to the reader?
3. What are metaphors and how are they used?
4. What are similes and how are they used?
5. In what ways do writers use or refer to the five senses? (Sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste)
6. How strong is the element of *vicarious experience?*
   a. Bear in mind that many of our experiences are vicarious.
   b. Most of our knowledge comes to us in this manner.
   c. We have a vicarious experience every time we hear or read a story, or whenever a person tells us something that has happened to him.
7. Why does the main character have to suffer?
   a. The problem concerning him is clearly stated.
   b. His problem grows larger or becomes more intense.
   c. It is good to face these facts: life is dull without problems, but life is sad if problems are never solved.
8. Whose point of view is represented?
   a. How would the story be different from another character's point of view?
   b. Would you have used a different point of view if you had written the story?
9. Why do authors let animals talk?
   a. Do you see a useful purpose in this technique?
   b. Do you have any objections to it?
10. Is the story written in the first person or in the third person?
   a. "I" stories
   b. "He" stories
11. The fun of discovery is important.
   a. Why does the author let the reader *discover* certain facts? Why does he not just tell us "straight across the board"?
   b. How does the author apply this technique of discovery?
12. What makes a literary classic?
   a. All really good stories have similar characteristics that hold the reader's interest.

b. Believability and probability are good ingredients; but so is the charm of fantasy. The most improbable story can be a classic if it is well written.
c. Literary skill is not enough; the story must also be deeply and warmly human.
d. The story must have a basic, universal appeal.

13. The quality of kindness is essential to good creative writing.
a. All great story people are kind, even if they are neither gentle nor handsome or beautiful.
b. All great real-life people are kind, too.
c. "Greatness" here is not synonymous with fame or fortune, but with strength of character, courage, and compassion.
d. Kindness makes up for many flaws and failures.
e. A kind person can be a great person despite his own defects.
f. Kindness is a power that cannot be measured; it reaches into many lives and improves the human condition.

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